

BERRIEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Board Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2022

CHAIRMAN TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

Chairperson R. McKinley Elliott called the regular Board of Commissioners' (BOC) meeting to order at 10:41 A.M. in the BOC's room at the Berrien County Administration Center, 701 Main Street, St. Joseph, Michigan.

INVOCATION:

Register of Deeds Lora Freehling gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Treasurer Shelly Weich led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

The Chair instructed the Clerk to take a roll call with the following results:

9 PRESENT: Rayonte Bell, Jim Curran, Robert Harrison, Michael Majerek, Ezra Scott, David Vollrath, Julie Wuerfel, Mamie Yarbrough and R. McKinley Elliott.

2 ABSENT: Teri Sue Freehling and Jon Hinkelman.

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE MAY 5, 2022 MEETING:

Commissioner Curran moved and supported by Commissioner Bell, to approve the BOC regular meeting minutes of May 5, 2022. Motion carried and no nays.

COMMUNICATION(S):

County Clerk Sharon Tyler received and distributed to the Board of Commissioners (BOC) the following communication:

- Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners, a resolution urging State Legislature to amend the Michigan Auto Insurance Reform Act to address a reimbursement cap for auto accident victims, received on May 9, 2022.

Commissioner Yarbrough asked if the Berrien County BOC could approve a similar resolution. She stated she has a family member who is affected by this issue. Chairperson Elliott will look into this matter.

PRESENTATION - Mike Krombeen, Midwest Strategy Group:

Midwest Strategy Group Mike Krombeen (via Zoom) introduced himself and spoke about Midwest Strategy Group. He discussed the Rural Broadband Efforts and the Available Parks Funding as follows:

Rural Broadband Efforts

Mike Krombeen stated the legislature approved a 4.7 billion dollar supplemental (SB 565) that includes 250 million dollars related to broadband expansion. This funding will provide competitive broadband infrastructure grants for ISPs to extend broadband service in unserved areas. Additionally, up to 5% of funding can be used to create/operate the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) and to hire up to 8.0 limited-term employees for that office.

The State continues to fund CMIC grants, which was the model for the supplemental appropriation. The CMIC grants are for projects that exclusively extend broadband service into unserved areas in Michigan. This is a competitive grant process that is technology neutral and results in awards based on objective and efficient procedures. "Broadband service" means a retail terrestrial service capable of delivering high-speed internet access at speeds of at least 25 megabits per second downstream and 3 megabits per second upstream. "Unserved area" means either a census block lacking access to broadband service from at least one (1) internet service provider, an area lacking access to broadband service from at least one (1) internet service provider

according to the most accurate and granular data on the broadband map created by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Senator LaSata recently introduced SB 970, which was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee. The introduced version of the legislation doesn't currently have funding attached to it, but the mechanics of the bill would provide funding to counties to identify places for expansion and to contract with ISPs to provide that extended broadband service. That legislation allows for investment into fast speed technology not less than 100 mbps download and 20 mbps upload.

Available Parks Funding

He stated the Legislature also passed 450 million dollars for parks funding in that 4.7 billion dollars supplemental (SB 565). 250 million dollars is being used to develop, improve, repair, and maintain state parks, state recreation areas, and state-designated trails while the other 200 million is being used for local parks and trails. 65 million will be used by the DNR to implement a local parks and recreation grant program which we believe will look similar to the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant Program.

The Senate Appropriations Committee voted on Wednesday to pass SB 1028 which includes \$45.6 million for 117 projects approved by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board. The recommended appropriation would include 22 acquisition projects (\$22.3 million) and 95 development projects (\$23.3 million). This includes \$4.7M for the Berrien Springs State Game Area, 232K for Niles (Dam Park Development), \$124K for Niles Trailhead Project, 50K the Toth Park Playground, 50K the Corrond Tennis Courts, and 50k the Kedzie Playground. This legislation should pass the full Senate without objection and then on to the House. I believe this will be done/signed by Governor before the 4th of July.

Discussion was held.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING RESOLUTIONS – Public comments at this portion of the meeting must be related to resolutions listed on today's agenda only. Those speaking during public comments may do so no longer than two minutes and shall identify themselves by name and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9B-C). The public should refer to the resolution # that they are commenting on as a part of their comments: None.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Commissioner Scott moved and supported by Commissioner Wuerfel, to approve today's Consent Calendar as presented:

<u>Resolutions #</u>	<u>Description</u>
F2205030	Weekly Bills & Road Payables
F2205282	Extend Broadband Grant Application Deadline

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call the roll with the following results:

9 YEAS: Curran, Harrison, Majerek, Scott, Vollrath, Wuerfel, Yarbrough, Bell and Elliott.

Motion carried, no nays.

ADDED RESOLUTION(S): None.

COMMITTEE REPORT(S) – Personnel & Human Services, Administration and Finance Committees:

The Personnel & Human Services, Administration and Finance Committees presented their Committee Reports. Discussion was held. Parent Committee minutes are available at www.berriencounty.org.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

Motion:

Commissioner Yarbrough moved and seconded by Commissioner Scott, to approve the following Board Appointments, effective immediately:

Recommendation by Finance Committee

Appointment to the Planning Commission to fill a vacancy:

Finish term – term expires December 31, 2022:

- Adam Schaller

Appointment to the Economic Development Board to fill vacancies:

Finish terms – term expires December 31, 2027:

- John Bonkoske
- Ashley Butler

Motion carried, no nays.

COMMISSIONER REPORT(S):

The Commissioners presented their outside committee reports.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Administrator Brian Dissette gave his Administrator's Report. The Peace Officers Memorial Day Service will be held on Monday.

Executive Administrative Assistant Annette Christie reviewed next week's schedule.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS - Those speaking during public comments may do so no longer than two minutes and shall identify themselves by name and city, township, or village. (Article III, 3.9B-C):

Chairperson Elliott read a statement prepared by Corporate Council regarding the conduct of the speaker during public comments.

Adolf Pelzer, Hagar Township, spoke about the Road Commission board and why the BOC eliminated the Road Commission, increasing the minutes for Public Comments and the layout of the BOC room.

James Martin, Benton Charter Township, introduced himself as a candidate for County Commissioner, District 3. He spoke about the Women's Right March to be held on Sunday.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMINDERS:

Administrator Dissette announced Carol's Hope fundraiser for Saturday night.

Chairperson Elliott stated the following announcement is on today's Agenda:

- Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners – Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 8:35 A.M.
- Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners – Thursday, May 19, 2022 at 10:30 A.M.
- Blossomtime parade will be held Saturday.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 A.M.

R. McKinley Elliott, Chairperson

Sharon J. Tyler, County Clerk

Minutes are to be approved at the next BOC meeting.